

### Remarks

By this Response, no claim is amended. After entry of this Response, claims 1-39 will remain pending. Reconsideration in view of the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicant appreciates the withdrawal of the 35 USC § 112, second paragraph, rejection of claims 11 and 23.

Claims 1-29, 31-33, 35-37 and 39 remain rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) over EP 1 103 232 A1 (Bianchetti). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 1 is directed to an adapter for use in a handpiece system that includes a supply conduit and a medical instrument having an electrical operating element. The adapter comprises an adapter body and, as amended, adapter electrical leads. When the adapter is in place between the supply conduit and the medical instrument with the adapter electrical leads electrically connected to the supply conduit and to the medical instrument, electrical power is received by the adapter from the supply conduit and transmitted through the adapter to the operating element.

As recited in claim 1, the adapter is selectively switchable by a manual operation **to move the adapter leads relative to the supply conduit** to match a polarity of the electrical power transmitted from the supply conduit to a polarity required by the operating element.

Similarly, claim 13 recites that **the adapter is selectively switchable by a manual operation to move the electrical leads of the adapter relative to the supply conduit**.

Claim 25 recites that **the adapter is selectively switchable by a manual operation to move the electrical leads of the adapter relative to the supply contacts of the supply conduit**.

Claim 30 recites **manually switching the switchable adapter into a second position different from said initial position to move the electrical leads of the adapter relative to the first part**.

Claim 35 recites that **the adapter is selectively switchable by a manual operation to move the transmission leads relative to the supply conduit**.

Claims 36 and 37 are each recite that **the adapter is selectively switchable by a manual operation to move the transmission leads relative to the supply conduit and supply hose, respectively**.

Claim 38 recites **switching the switchable adapter into a second position different from said initial position to move the transmission leads relative to the first part**.

Bianchetti does not disclose or even suggest an adapter with electrical leads where the adapter is selectively switchable by a manual operation to move the leads relative to the supply conduit. Furthermore, it would not have been obvious to modify Bianchetti to achieve this feature.

The "adapter 101" is not a separate structure--rather, it is a "connector" end or terminal end of a conduit that supplies power to the handpiece. Therefore, any rotation of the connector end 101 also rotates the conduit. The connector end 101 cannot be rotated without also rotating the conduit, so there can be no *relative* rotation of the connector end 101 with respect to the conduit when either is rotated.

Similar to claim 1, Bianchetti also does not disclose:

- That **the adapter is selectively switchable by a manual operation to move the electrical leads of the adapter relative to the supply conduit** (claim 13)
- That **the adapter is selectively switchable by a manual operation to move the electrical leads of the adapter relative to the supply contacts of the supply conduit** (claim 25)
- **Manually switching the switchable adapter into a second position different from said initial position to move the electrical leads of the adapter relative to the first part** (claim 30)
- That **the adapter is selectively switchable by a manual operation to move the transmission leads relative to the supply conduit** (claim 35)
- That **the adapter is selectively switchable by a manual operation to move the transmission leads relative to the supply conduit and supply hose** (claims 36 and 37)
- **Switching the switchable adapter into a second position different from said initial position to move the transmission leads relative to the first part** (claim 38)

Accordingly, none of the claims is anticipated. Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

It is noted that each independent claim recites the action "to move," and that this feature does not appear to have been addressed in the Office action. The Office action states "applicant amended the claims to require that the adapter leads were selectively switchable by a manual operation relative to the supply conduit," without addressing the "to move" language.

Applicant maintains that the claims as currently written sufficiently describe and delimit the subject matter. Applicant is willing, however, to consider any changes to claim wording that the Examiner believes to be necessary.

It is pointed out that the claimed structures and methods provide for an adapter that allows connection of a supply conduit to a handpiece with the adapter connected between the supply conduit

and the handpiece where the adapter can be switched to assure that the handpiece is connected with the correct polarity, but that does not require any twisting of the conduit. Conventional conduits are not intended to be twisted or rotated, and rotating a conduit by 180° from its normal unrotated position would generate a torque urging it to return to its original orientation. Repeated rotation of the conduit in such a manner would weaken it and could lead to broken connections, either in the electrical conductors or other supply lines within the conduit. Such a result could have serious consequences, e.g., if a water line broke and water was allowed to come into contact with an electrical line.

In addition, most dental operations require precise positioning of the handpiece. If the supply conduit exerts a residual torque on the handpiece connected to the conduit, i.e., because the conduit has been twisted from its normal position, this residual torque can cause the handpiece to move unexpectedly when the dentist relaxes his or her grip on the handpiece. Such a result could have serious consequences, e.g., injury to the patient and/or damage to teeth or dental work.

Claims 30, 34, and 38 are rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) over Bianchetti. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

As indicated, Bianchetti does not disclose or even suggest the claimed feature in which the adapter is selectively switchable by a manual operation to move the adapter leads relative to the supply conduit.

Moreover, there is no suggestion to modify Bianchetti to provide this feature. Accordingly, claims 30, 34 and 38 would not have been obvious over Bianchetti, and the § 103(a) rejection should be withdrawn.


Based on the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims are directed to allowable subject matter and that the application is in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner believe that anything further is necessary to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's representative by telephone.

Respectfully submitted,

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